

2016



Louisiana Shrimp

Commercial Rules and Regulations

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries



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Harvesters

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Harvest Areas

For management purposes, Louisiana's state waters are divided into inside and outside waters. The "shrimp line" separates these waters. It generally follows the coastline from the Louisiana/Texas state line to the Louisiana/Mississippi state line. Inside waters (landward of the shrimp line) are inshore waters; outside waters (seaward out to three nautical miles) are the territorial seas. Inside waters are further divided by major estuarine basin. The Commission may amend the shrimp line due to environmental changes. See the latest coordinates at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/insideoutside-shrimp-line.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), the Commission, and the Louisiana Legislature are responsible for managing the shrimp fishery in inshore waters and the territorial seas. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries are responsible for federal waters.

Commercial Harvester Licenses and Fees

To harvest shrimp commercially in Louisiana's state waters, you must have the following licenses issued by LDWF:

- **Commercial Fisherman's License*** (\$55 resident, \$460 nonresident)
- **Vessel License** in the vessel owner's name (\$15 resident, \$60 nonresident), unless shrimping with legal land-based gear
- **Gear Licenses*** for the fishing gear you're using:
 - For each shrimp trawl (\$25 resident, \$100 nonresident)
 - For each butterfly net (\$25 resident, \$100 nonresident)

- For each skimmer net (\$25 resident, \$100 nonresident)
- For each cast net (\$25 resident, \$100 nonresident)

*If you are a Louisiana resident, age 70 or older, you may instead purchase a **Senior Commercial License** (includes gear license) for \$20.

You must pay an annual gear fee (\$10 resident, \$40 nonresident).

To commercially harvest shrimp for live bait, you must have a **Special Bait Dealer Permit** (\$110; see page 6).

To sell shrimp you have caught to anyone who doesn't have a Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License (besides consumers) or transport your catch out-of-state, you must have a **Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License** (\$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident).

To sell shrimp you have caught directly to consumers within the state, you must have a **Fresh Products License** (\$20 resident, \$120 nonresident). Your spouse may purchase a **Fresh Products-Spouse License** for \$5 to sell directly to consumers.

To apply for LDWF-issued licenses, contact **225.765.2898** or visit LDWF's Headquarters at **2000 Quail Drive in Baton Rouge**. Renew your licenses online at www.la.wildlifelicense.com.

To harvest shrimp in federal waters, you must have a federal shrimp permit issued by NOAA Fisheries. There is a moratorium on these permits; you may only apply for one if an original permit is transferred to you. View the current list of transferable permits at go.usa.gov/3FcW5. Contact NOAA Fisheries at **877.376.4877** for more information.

Seasons

You may only harvest shrimp during open shrimp seasons (unless you're permitted to harvest live bait under a Special Bait Dealer Permit). The Commission sets shrimp seasons for Louisiana's state waters by area, according to scientific information about environmental and water conditions and the growth rates, distribution, and abundance of shrimp. They also consider input from the industry and other stakeholders. In general, shrimp seasons by area are:

- **Inside:** open when enough market-sized shrimp are available in these waters for harvest. The spring/brown shrimp season generally runs May to July. The fall/white shrimp season is generally open mid-August to mid-December; some waters stay open into January.
- **Outside:** year-round, except from mid or late December to April or May in certain areas to protect small white shrimp and allow them to grow to market size. The Commission can close these waters at other times of the year if necessary.
- **Federal waters off Louisiana:** year-round

Go to www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/shrimp-seasons for the most up to date information on Louisiana's shrimp seasons.

Size/Possession Limits

There is no size limit for any shrimp harvested during the spring open season nor for brown or seabob shrimp harvested during any open season.

White shrimp is legal size when a pound of white shrimp equals 100 whole shrimp or less. You may not harvest sub-legal white shrimp, except from October 15 through the 3rd Monday in December. Also, when more than half of your catch is seabob or brown shrimp, no more than 10% (by weight) of your catch may be sub-legal size white shrimp.

Legal Gear

You may only use trawls, butterfly nets, skimmer nets, and cast nets to harvest shrimp during open seasons in Louisiana's waters.

Bycatch Reduction Requirements

Federal law requires all shrimpers fishing with powered or mechanically-retrieved otter trawls (except test nets with headrope lengths of 12 feet or less) to equip them with turtle excluder devices (TEDs), which allow incidentally captured turtles to escape the nets. In lieu of TEDs, shrimpers fishing with test trawls and skimmer and butterfly nets must limit their tow times to 75 minutes from November 1 through March 31 and 55 minutes from April 1 through October 31 to reduce potential impacts on sea turtles.

When fishing in federal waters, shrimp trawlers must install bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) in each trawl to reduce catch of non-targeted species.

Did you know?

During the 2015 regular legislative session, legislators repealed a state law prohibiting LDWF enforcement agents from enforcing federal TED laws. As of August 1, 2015, LDWF agents are authorized to conduct TED inspections aboard shrimp vessels.

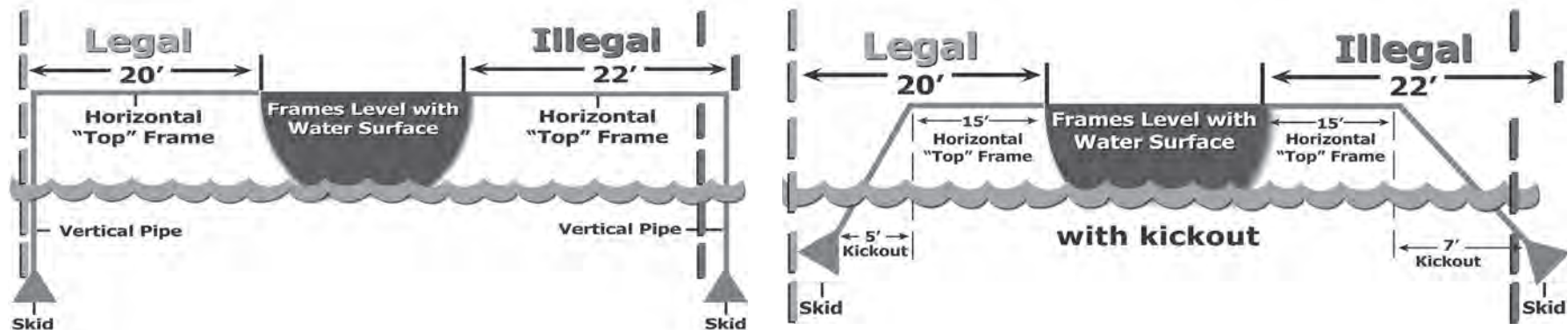


NOAA agents inspecting a shrimper's TED for proper installation.

Gear Requirements

Trawls	
Mesh	Must be at least 5/8-inch bar or 1-1/4 inches stretched mesh. Must be at least 3/4-inch bar or 1-1/2 inches stretched mesh during the fall inshore shrimp season from the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island to the Atchafalaya River.
Size and number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inside waters:</i> regulations permit one trawl measuring 50 feet long or less along the corkline and 66 feet long or less along the lead line; two trawls not exceeding 25 feet each along the corkline and 33 feet along the lead line, with trawl doors no more than 8 feet long and 43 inches high; OR two trawls not exceeding 25 feet each along the corkline and 33 feet along the lead line, with no more than two outer trawl doors no larger than 8 feet long and 43 inches high and no more than two inner sled doors. Each vessel may also pull a test trawl.* • <i>Outside waters:</i> A vessel's nets may not exceed a total of 130 feet of cork line and 165 feet of lead line, in addition to one test trawl.* • <i>Breton and Chandeleur Sounds:</i> Regulations permit two trawls, each measuring no more than 65 feet long along the corkline and no more than 82 feet long along the lead line, plus one test trawl.* • <i>Federal waters:</i> up to four trawls of any size plus one test trawl. <p>*A test trawl is no more than 16 feet long along the corkline or 20 feet long along the lead line or head rope.</p>
Butterfly and skimmer nets	
Mesh	Must be at least 5/8-inch bar or 1-1/4 inches stretched mesh. Must be at least 3/4 inch bar or 1-1/2 inches stretched mesh during the fall inshore shrimp season from the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island to the Atchafalaya River.
Size and number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single stationary butterfly net may measure no more than 22 feet vertically or horizontally. • Individual nets of double butterfly nets may measure no more than 12 feet vertically or horizontally, unless used on a vessel, in which case they may measure no more than 12 feet vertically by 16 feet horizontally. • Double skimmer nets may have an opening circumference of no more than 72 feet for each net and a maximum lead line length of 33 feet.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butterfly nets may be mounted no more than 24 inches from the side of the vessel. • Skimmer nets may be mounted to the horizontal net frame at any distance from the gunwale of the vessel as long as the mounting distance and horizontal length of the net frame does not exceed 20 feet from the gunwale. • You may not tie individual nets together. • No sweeper devices, leads, extensions, wings, or other attachments. • You must mark butterfly nets with a tag listing your name, address, and net license number when using them in East and West Passes of the Calcasieu River, Grand Bayou, and in Oyster Bayou (all within Cameron Parish only); if found unmarked, these nets will be seized by LDWF agents or other authorized employees. This tag must be attached to the net, frame, or any other part directly attached to the net or frame and must be visible above the water at all times. Letters must be at least 3 inches high and of appropriate width to make it visible and readable.

Examples of legal and illegal skimmer net frames. (20 foot measurement is taken when top frame is in the horizontal position. These sketches are only examples; other skimmer net frame configurations using horizontal measurements less than 20 feet may also be legal.)



Restricted and Closed Areas

Some areas, including wildlife refuges, wildlife management areas, and habitat conservation areas, may be closed to certain gear types, methods, and/or times of day and may have different possession limits. Some are closed to shrimping altogether. These restrictions and closures help protect developing shrimp populations and reduce conflicts among users. See www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/shrimp-1 for details.

Shrimper/Crab Trap Interactions

If you catch an unserviceable crab trap, you must keep it on your vessel and properly dispose of it onshore. If you catch a serviceable crab trap without a float, return it to the water with a common float (a white, plastic, one-gallon or larger bleach bottle).

Live Bait Shrimp

To commercially harvest shrimp for live bait, you must have a **Special Bait Dealer Permit**, which allows you to harvest shrimp for bait at any time. The requirements for this permit include:

- A permit application and fee
- \$1,000 cash bond, which must be forfeited if anyone associated with the permit violates any of the permit requirements or any commercial fishing laws and regulations
- Background check for previous wildlife or fisheries violations
- Inspection of live bait holding facilities (onshore and on vessel)
- Proper signage on the vessel identifying that the vessel is working under the bait permit
- Public notice that live bait is available
- Use of an approved, fully operational vessel monitoring system onboard the vessel
- Recordkeeping and reporting

You may only use the following gear under this permit:

- One trawl no more than 25 feet along the cork line and 33 feet along the leadline
- Two skimmer nets with individual nets no more than 16 feet

measured horizontally, 12 feet measured vertically, or 20 feet measure diagonally


For more information, visit www.wlf.louisiana.gov/permit/special-bait-dealer-permit.

Compliance and Enforcement

Through events, outreach materials, and resources, LDWF works hard to make sure fishermen understand relevant rules and regulations. LDWF's Law Enforcement Division is responsible for ensuring compliance with these rules and regulations through regular patrols and investigations. LDWF partners with NOAA Fisheries and U.S. Coast Guard enforcement agents and officers to increase their enforcement capabilities and carry out their important mission in Louisiana's waters and beyond.

Science-Based Fishery Management

Louisiana's shrimp management program is firmly rooted in science—we continually monitor shrimp populations' growth, distribution, and abundance as well as environmental and water conditions in coastal marshes and bays. Using these data, we project when the majority of the shrimp populations within the state's seven major estuarine basins will reach market size. We then use these projections to determine when and where to open the shrimp season. This science-based, adaptive system has allowed us to increase shrimp yields and economic opportunities for the shrimp industry by adjusting seasons in response to the conditions that influence shrimp populations.

A large, round metal pot, likely a stock pot, is filled with a large quantity of cooked shrimp. The shrimp are piled together, filling most of the pot. They appear to be in a light-colored liquid, possibly a broth or sauce. The pot has a thick, dark rim. The background is dark and out of focus.

LOUISIANA
IS THE #1
SUPPLIER OF
DOMESTIC
SHRIMP IN THE
NATION.

Industry Support

Louisiana Wild Seafood Certification Program (LWSCP)



Through LWSCP, LDWF aims to build a brand that guarantees the origin of Louisiana wild-caught seafood. Through strict chain of custody requirements, the program guarantees that all seafood products bearing the

Certified Louisiana Seafood label were caught in Louisiana or Gulf waters by a licensed Louisiana fisherman, landed at a Louisiana dock, and processed and packaged by a Louisiana-based company. The program provides education for participants on best seafood handling and sanitation practices to ensure the utmost safety and quality. When a buyer sees this label, they can be confident they're buying authentic Louisiana wild-caught seafood, a premium product known for freshness, consistent quality, and sustainability, and that they're supporting our local fishing communities.

By branding and showcasing Louisiana seafood, LWSCP helps suppliers increase the value of their seafood and remain competitive in the marketplace. LWSCP participants benefit from free marketing support, such as:

- Market portal linking Certified Louisiana Seafood suppliers with buyers
- Promotions through the program website, social media, and events including seafood festivals and industry conventions
- Point-of-sale materials such as decals, brochures, and apparel
- Access to program partners including the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board, Audubon GULF, NOAA Fisheries, Louisiana Sea Grant, and other partners who purchase and promote Certified Louisiana Seafood.

Licensed Louisiana commercial fishermen are automatically eligible for the program; licensed Louisiana Fresh Products dealers and Wholesale/Retail Seafood dealers must obtain a permit to participate. They must also comply with all state and federal permitting and reporting requirements. Find out more or sign up to participate at www.LouisianaCertifiedSeafood.com.

Seafood Technology Equipment Program (STEP)

STEP provides LWSCP participants with funding to improve their equipment to increase the quality and value of their seafood, critical elements of the premium Louisiana seafood brand. Since 2012, STEP has provided more than \$1.7 million to members of Louisiana's seafood industry, including support for shrimp harvesters, docks, and processors to upgrade their refrigeration equipment. LDWF staff are improving the funding process, assessing future needs of the industry, and will be developing funding initiatives to meet those needs. For more information, call **225.765.3980** or **1.855.262.1764 (toll-free)**.

Louisiana Fisheries Forward (LFF)

LFF is a voluntary education and training program for members of Louisiana's seafood community. Created by LDWF and Louisiana Sea Grant, LFF delivers training videos and fact sheets on a number of topics such as how to be a commercial fisherman and seafood business finance and management as well as hands-on workshops, training days, and demonstrations to showcase new technology and best practices. LFF's goal is to help improve the economic success of Louisiana's commercial fishing industry. Learn more at lafisheriesforward.org.

Buyers, Sellers, and Transporters

Licenses and Permits

To purchase and resell shrimp in Louisiana, you must have one of the following LDWF-issued licenses:		
If you:	You must have a:	Notes:
Buy shrimp, including bait, in Louisiana from commercial fishermen for sale or resale	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License	\$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident. There are no restrictions on whom these licenseholders may sell seafood to.
Buy shrimp, including bait, in Louisiana from commercial fishermen for sale or resale from a vehicle	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle License	\$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident. There are no restrictions on whom these licenseholders may sell seafood products to.
Buy shrimp from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer for sale to consumers for personal or household use	Retail Seafood Dealer License	\$105 resident, \$405 nonresident
Buy shrimp from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer for sale to consumers for personal or household use from a vehicle	Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle License	\$105 resident, \$405 nonresident
Are a commercial fisherman selling shrimp to anyone who doesn't have a Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License (besides consumers) or transporting your catch out-of-state	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License	\$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident
Are a commercial fisherman selling shrimp directly to consumers within the state	Fresh Products License	\$20 resident, \$120 nonresident. A \$5 Resident Fresh Products-Spouse License is also available for a commercial fisherman's spouse to sell directly to consumers.
To operate any commercial transport vehicle and load, unload, or transport seafood, you must have one of the following LDWF-issued licenses:		
If you:	You must have a:	Notes:
Are a commercial fisherman transporting your catch to a wholesale/retail dealer	Commercial Fisherman's License	\$55 resident, \$460 nonresident
Are a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer delivering seafood	Seafood Transport License	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Are a licensed retail seafood dealer picking up seafood from a wholesale/retail dealer and transporting it to your business	Seafood Transport License	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Are transporting a commercial fisherman's catch to a wholesale/retail dealer for sale	Seafood Transport License	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Are a wholesale/retail seafood dealer	Seafood Transport License purchased with the dealer license	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Ship seafood out of state	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License OR Transport License purchased with the dealer license	Dealer License: \$250 resident; \$1,105 nonresident Transport License: \$30 for residents and nonresidents

Shipping Requirements

You must mark all vehicles used to transport seafood with the name and address of your company. You must also plainly mark all shipments containing seafood and attach records, tags, or certificates showing your name and the receiver's name, an itemized statement of the number of pounds of seafood, and the names of each kind or species of seafood in the shipment.

Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements

Dealers and retailers must keep records of the following for 3 years:

- The quantity and species of shrimp you purchase, the date of purchase, and the full name and license and/or permit number of the commercial fisherman, wholesale/retail dealer, or out-of-state seller from whom you purchase the shrimp
- The quantity and species of shrimp you sell and the name and license number of the person to whom you sell it
- Quantity and species of shrimp and the date you sell it to consumers

Dealers and retailers purchasing from commercial fishermen or anyone other than a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer or fresh products licenseholder must report these transactions every month on LDWF-issued trip tickets, documenting information about the purchase, including what it is, where and how it was caught, sizes, quantities, etc. Commercial fishermen who sell their catch directly to consumers (fresh products licenseholders) must also complete and submit trip tickets.

The information on trip tickets provides fishery scientists with gear and area specific catch information that improves the accuracy of stock assessments and provides fishery managers with information on impacts of environmental changes and events on the fishery.

For details, call **225.765.2371**.

Shrimp Excise Tax

Louisiana collects an excise tax on all saltwater shrimp harvested from state waters as well as all shrimp imported into the state.

Taxes apply as follows:

- 15 cents per barrel of 210 pounds of head-on, unpeeled shrimp
- 15 cents per barrel of 125 pounds of headless, unpeeled shrimp
- 15 cents per barrel of 75 pounds of headless, peeled shrimp

The first wholesale/retail dealer who receives the shrimp must pay this tax. For imported shrimp brought to cold storage, the dealer storing, brokering, or distributing the shrimp must pay the tax.

Taxes are deposited in Louisiana's Conservation Fund and support LDWF's Law Enforcement Division and its operations.



Did you know?

Brown shrimp provide the bulk of Louisiana's production of small shrimp—they're typically harvested at a smaller size than white shrimp, averaging 70 to 80 whole shrimp per pound. Brown shrimp landings peak in May and June.

White shrimp make up around 60% of Louisiana's annual shrimp landings. They're harvested at an average of 30 to 40 per pound, which leads to a higher average price for white shrimp. White shrimp landings peak in the fall.

Louisiana Shrimp Harvest Facts

70%

of Louisiana's annual shrimp landings are caught in state waters (the rest are harvested offshore in federal waters or in waters of other states).

112
million

pounds of shrimp were harvested by Louisiana's commercial fishermen in 2014.

\$180
million

The dockside value of Louisiana's 2014 shrimp harvest.

5,500

Approximate number of licensed shrimpers in Louisiana.

Get Involved!

To manage Louisiana's shrimp fisheries, LDWF and the Commission rely on scientific data and landings records as well as public input. Our decisions directly impact you, so it's important that we have your input as we define management goals and strategies. We encourage you to participate in the management process to ensure that we consider your interests and that you understand the regulatory process and resulting management actions.

The Shrimp Task Force (representatives from the shrimp industry and relevant state agencies) is responsible for studying and monitoring the shrimp industry and making recommendations to LDWF, the Commission, and other state agencies on improving production and the economic sustainability of the industry. The task force meets regularly, and meetings are open to the public. See www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/shrimp-task-force for more details. The Commission's monthly meetings and our open regulatory process provide additional opportunities for public input.

Text and Email Alerts

Sign up to receive text and/or email notifications about season openings and closings, regulatory changes, and task force and Commission meetings at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/signup.



Drop us a line

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